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good and what is bad in English prose style. The following passage, which is quoted in full from the fourth edition, revised, will serve to illustrate these fundamental defects (pp. 178-180):

"192. The second counsel means to avoid explanatory interpolations (§ 150).

When we had reached the bare little station we were refreshed by the sight of wooded mountains all around it,

is a typical instance of description clogged by worthless lumber. All it means is,

The sight of wooded mountains all around the bare little station was refreshing;

and it ought to be still further reduced by combination with what follows.

The refreshment from wooded mountains all around the bare little station prepared us to enjoy the view of far blue peaks from the first ridge.

This is the negative way of descriptive conciseness. The positive way is to charge each word with suggestion: instead of depending altogether on nouns and adjectives, to force contribution from the verbs too (§ 162). The best-stored mind has not adjectives enough for description. The exhaustion of epithets overtaking a coaching party in a new country is typical of what happens to every student of letters very early in his practice. Happy he, if he learns then and there that the effort to make adjectives suffice is futile. From time to time a passing success is achieved thus by the sensational torturing of language. But the strain of this kind of writing is no more obvious than its failure. The surer way is to exact of each word its share.

A waft from the pines darkening the hills about the shanty stimulated us to laugh at the far glimpse of our own blue peaks from the first rise.

This is better than the first sentence because it accomplishes more in the same space by cutting out the lumber: but also better than the second because *pinen* is more concrete and specific (§ 226) than *wooded*, *waft* and *laugh* than *refreshment* and *enjoy*, *stimulated* than *prepared*. The description is both stronger and easier because nearly every word is suggestive."

It would be an interesting experiment to read aloud to a class the original sentence together with its various "improvements" and ask for honest expressions of opinion. How many, for example, could explain in the last sentence the state of mind of the pedestrians who by a "waft from the pines" are "stimulated to laugh at the far glimpse of their own blue peaks"? The most plausible explanation would be that the party made too many stops at public houses on the way.

In the appendix the author has wisely substituted in place of Bulletin 24, U. S. Department of Agriculture, an interesting chapter on "The Glacier Lakes," by John Muir; and instead of the difficult and technical treatise on Japanese art, has inserted a selection from Lafcadio Hearn, on "The Genius of Japanese Civilization," with the "idiosyncrasies of punctuation retained."

Even in its revised form the book is calculated rather to

repel the student than to beget in him a love of good English style.

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ANGLO-SAXON LITERATURE.

Grundriss der germanischen Philologie. II Band, VI Abschnitt, Literaturgeschichte. Englische Literatur von ALOIS BRANDL. Angelsächsische Periode. Strassburg: Trübner, 1908.

One of the most important contributions to the history of Anglo-Saxon literature which has appeared for many years has now been added to the second edition of Paul's *Grundriss*. In form it is only a section of this larger work, but in scope and minuteness it far exceeds the measure of most single volumes on similar subjects. The entire Anglo-Saxon period, which Professor Brandl believes should be extended into the middle of the twelfth century, is treated in considerable detail. The book is one for the scholar rather than the general reader, being condensed as far as possible, and practically presupposing some familiarity with the subject. Great labor, erudition, and judgment have been combined in its making. The copious bibliographical references will be exceedingly useful, and the critical discussions based on recent researches make the whole perhaps the best existing scientific presentation of the beginnings of English literature. A judicial and conservative attitude is generally assumed towards disputed questions. There will be many cases in which the conclusions expressed will not meet with assent, but if the author has occasionally failed to indicate that a given point is open to controversy, it is doubtless from the conviction that a somewhat dogmatic attitude is necessary where lack of space makes discussion impossible.

The first edition of the *Grundriss* contains, as will be remembered, only the unfinished outline of early national poetry; the completion of the section on Anglo-Saxon literature was prevented by the untimely death of ten Brink. The present work, then, is in no sense a revision, even of the small portion actually completed, but is entirely independent. The mere statement that it consists

of a hundred and ninety-three pages gives no adequate idea of the wealth of material presented, or of the terseness and suggestiveness of the treatment. In a short review, many interesting pages must of necessity be ignored. Only the more important matters can be touched upon, and then only with a brevity that will serve rather as a suggestion and caution to the reader than as an elucidation or solution of difficulties. The chapters on the prose may be passed over more rapidly, both because they involve fewer disputed problems and because nearly four times as much space is devoted to the poetry as to the prose texts.

Professor Brandl employs an elaborate schematic division of the material, partly chronological, but largely according to types, the effect of Germanic tradition being best illustrated in this way. A slight inconsistency appears in including Section D, *Prosa vor Alfred* (pp. 1051-61), under the grand division I, *Altheimische Dichtung vor Alfred* (p. 947). The general remarks on the separation of English literature into periods (pp. 941-47) are worth noting, a more philosophic grouping being here insisted upon than that usually followed. To the bibliography on page 943 should be added the new *Cambridge History of English Literature*, the first volume of which, although not wholly satisfactory, is not to be neglected by the student of this epoch. A few statements about the *Charms* are not quite accurate. The *Bibliothek der ags. Poesie* contains only eight verse-charms, not nine; the one printed in II, 202 being merely a more exact transcript of No. 8, Vol. I. Another, which is really a verse-charm, is printed in the *Bibliothek der ags. Prosa*, VI, 107. (Cf. Brandl, p. 957.) Again, it is at least doubtful if Wotan was the original deity of the *Hundesegen* (p. 956); the arguments of Pribsch, *Academy*, No. 1255, whom Brandl apparently follows, being inconclusive on this disputed point.¹ Two charms to recover stolen cattle are printed by MacBryde, *Mod. Lang. Notes*, XXI, 180 ff. This article might be added to the list noted pp. 957-8. Some new ideas in regard to the Anglo-Saxon *Dirges* are advanced by Schücking, *Englische Studien*, XXXIX, 1 ff.

¹ Cf. the forthcoming monograph by F. Grendon, *The Anglo-Saxon Charms*. I am indebted to Mr. Grendon for information about the Charms.

Critical opinion in regard to *Widsith* is very well summarized. The author divides the poem into distinct sections, belonging to different periods, yet he thinks the present structure of the poem consciously artistic. He recognizes the impossibility of separating the different sections exactly, yet thinks stylistic differences define them fairly well. It is not certain that the *Rondings* are the *Reudigni* of Tacitus, and the *Myrgings* are certainly not to be identified with the *Maurungani* (p. 966, cf. Heinzel, *Sitzungsber. der Wiener Akademie*, Phil.-Hist. Klasse, 1889, p. 25). *Wilna* (*Wida*, 78) is better taken as an abstract noun than as the name of a country. The expression *þearfe seegað, þoncword sprecað* (*Wida*, 137) hardly indicates that memory-verses were spoken rather than sung, whatever the fact may have been. Recent criticism has shown how much greater is the importance of lists of names in the development of epic than used to be thought the case. The monograph of Gudmund Schütte, *Oldsagn om Godtjod*, Cop. 1907, would strengthen the bibliography on this point. Brandl thinks the poem was completed in the eighth century, but before the time of Cynewulf, and in Mercia.

Throughout the book a distinction is made in quotations between vowels long both by origin and usage, and original long vowels later shortened in pronunciation, by marking them as follows: *liclēaþ* (cf. p. 948, note). The macron is used differently in such words as *geðmor*, in which the *e* shows the quality of the preceding consonant. It seems on the whole doubtful whether these distinctions are really necessary, but this procedure will doubtless meet with much more approval than that adopted by Holthausen in his recent edition of *Beowulf*.

The discussion of the lyrical and elegiac poems is disappointing. The summaries of the situations in such pieces as the *First Riddle* or *The Wife's Lament* are of very questionable accuracy. I have elsewhere tried to show (*Mod. Phil.*, v, 397 ff.) that it is often impossible to reconstruct these situations purely from the evidence of the lyrics themselves. The *First Riddle* Brandl recognizes as a lyric in the *ljoðahotttr* form, but he regards previous efforts to bring the story into connection with saga as unsuccessful, although he thinks it likely it may belong to some form of the Odoacer story, or perhaps be an isolated outlaw-

narrative. He is of the opinion that the *Husband's* (or *Lover's*) *Message* is connected with the *Wife's Lament*. This is doubtful, to say the least. The reader should be warned against the conclusions of Imelmann, who revives this theory (cf. Bradley, *Mod. Lang. Review*, II, 365 ff., and Schücking, *Zs. f. deut. Alt.*, XLIX, 163 ff.). It is hard to agree with Brandl that the meaning of the runes at the end of the *Message* is "leicht zu erraten." Certainly his explanation is obscure enough. The most convincing explanation thus far offered is that proposed by Bradley, *loc. cit.* The *Seafarer* Brandl states to be a dialog (p. 979), not telling the reader that the "old and young sailors" may well exist only in the imagination of critics.

The treatment of the Anglo-Saxon epic is particularly interesting. The discussion of *Beowulf* is the most detailed and important section in the whole volume, of which it occupies about one-fifth—pp. 988–1024. A preliminary sketch of it may be found in the paper read before the Berlin Academy, *Archiv*, CVIII, 152 ff. The author first takes up the *Finnburg Fragment* (pp. 983–86), showing the stylistic contrast to the longer poem, which leads to the assumption that the *Fragment* is only a part of an epic lay, which in its entirety did not exceed two hundred lines. The "harsh joy of battle" in this vivid scene has no counterpart in the "tender elegiac mood" of the Episode in the epic. In his interpretation of the relation of the *Fragment* to the Episode Brandl agrees in general with the Grein-Bugge theory. It is worth remarking that he arranges the two *Waldhere* fragments in reverse order to that generally adopted, and that he believes an ecclesiastic is responsible for the latest form of the poem.

The outline of the plot of *Beowulf*, and the analysis of its linguistic and metrical characteristics may be passed over, though it may be noted that the ms. is Vitellius A XV, fol. 129–198, not Vitellius A XXV, fol. 132–201. The problem of origins, in which there is such small agreement, is one of the most difficult matters to dispose of in such a book as this. Mythical and imaginative sources are first considered, then historical elements. A good deal of importance is attributed to myth, the figure of Breca "beruht auf der menschenartigen ausmalung eines Naturvorgan-

ges; aufgebrochen und offen gehalten wird das südsandinavische Meer im Winter durch den Wind, im westlichen Norwegen aber sorgt der Golfstrom für freies Fahrwasser" (p. 992). Grendel is likewise apparently considered mythical, though not to be interpreted with satisfying certainty; the monster was originally overcome by Beowa, "ein Schutzheros des Ackerbaues." The well-known passage in the Wiltshire Charter, which mentions *Grendles mere* and *Beowan hammes heegan* proves this early connection. The original mythical hero—"die eigentliche Sage galt wohl dem mythischen Beowa" (p. 999)—was displaced in time by the historical Beowulf. All this sounds quite orthodox and Müllenhoffian. Various Scandinavian stories are admitted to show a close resemblance to the Grendel-episode,—the tales of Grettir and Ormr Storfósson, and a number of märchen. The attempt to reconcile with later researches into the appearance of the story in Scandinavian the view that myths elaborated among the Anglo-Saxon formed the basis of the poem produces something the same impression of inconsistency in Brandl's summary as in the final edition of Müllenhoff's *Untersuchungen* (cf. Sarrazin, *Engl. Studien*, XVI, 72). Brandl says: "Die Sagenvergleichung ergibt demnach für den Kern der Grendel-Geschichte folgende Resultate: Zu Grunde liegt eine Erzählung von gründlicher Austilgung einer räuberischen Riesensippe, und zwar nicht durch das Schwert, da dies nach altem Aberglauben gegen Dämonen nicht ohne weiteres aufkommt, sondern durch Ringen und durch Anrufung höherer Mächte. Ursprünglich in skandinavischer Berglandschaft gedacht, kam sie mit den Angelsachsen nach Britannien, lebte aber auch bei den kontinentalen Nordgermanen fort und gelangte mit solchen nach Island. An verschiedenen Orten brachte man sie auf unabhängige Weise mit verschiedenen Lokalgrößen in Zusammenhang, bei den Angelsachsen mit der Gestalt des Beowa-Beowulf" (p. 995). It is not clear, however, just what Brandl's hypothesis of the combination of the different elements is,—how far he considers that the Grendel story had a double origin, in the Scandinavian material and in the mythical conceptions which he seems to regard as primitive. It is impossible to enter upon a dis-

cussion of this here.³ The adventure with the mother was not a "Nachdichtung," he continues, and the original order of the adventures was probably not that in the *Grettissaga*, since it is the male demon's duty to sally forth first, although this may involve an artistic anticlimax later. Brandl does not seem to make enough allowance for the possibility that the two adventures circulated in the form of independent lays, which were differently arranged as elaborate narratives grew up. The dragon episode is recognized as originally independent of the Grendel theme, and the Fahlbeck-Bugge hypothesis of the location of the Geats finds no support in these pages (p. 997). The Offa-Thrytho material appears a "ziemlich gesuchte Erwähnung," yet there is no reason to consider it an interpolation. This reference to East-Anglian material, however, supports the theory that the poem in its present form was put together at the Mercian court (pp. 998, 1001). The Christian elements are rightly said to be integral parts of the poem,—"wer die unheidnischen Elemente aus dem Beowulfepos vollständig entführen will, muss es umdichten." One might take issue with the chance statement that Beowulf is "bescheiden."

The remarks on the architectonics of the poem are particularly good. It is clearly shown how the limits of the rhapsody-form break down, and yet how far the whole is from attaining the symmetry and tranquillity of the ideal epic. In the section dealing with "higher criticism" Brandl flatly breaks with the theories of ten Brink and Müllenhoff. The general line of argument against the "liedertheorie" is well known, and this is concisely and convincingly summarized for *Beowulf*. More stress might have been laid on the fact that the weakest part of the old hypothesis is that it started from a purely imaginary conception of what the style of the heroic epic really was. Certain similarities to the *Aeneid* are pointed out, and the interesting idea is advanced that the classical poem exerted an influence on the composition of *Beowulf*! The very useful bibliographical section is modestly entitled "Versuch einer Beowulf-Bibliographie."

³ I hope to publish shortly a somewhat detailed investigation of these questions.

Brandl's review of the Christian poetry may be considered more briefly. Stylistic questions are given the most prominent place; the characteristics of the literary epic and the minstrel lay, which appear in varying proportions in the Cædmonian poems, are clearly defined. The name Cædmon is etymologised as connected with Celtic *cad*, "battle." In the dating of these poems, as indeed throughout the whole volume, Brandl places great confidence in Barnouw's test,—the absence of the article before the weak adjective and substantive. Largely on the strength of this, apparently, he has dated *Christ I* before Cynewulf, also *Genesis A*, *Daniel*, *Azarias*, *Guthlac A* and *Andreas* (pp. 1034–36). Elsewhere the same criterion is applied to relatively short pieces, as the *Ruin* (p. 978), in which three instances of absence of the article are held sufficient to form a judgment. It is admitted (p. 1034) that the normalizing of later scribes somewhat destroys the value of this test. The tendency to archaize, to use traditional formulas and expressions, so strong in Anglo-Saxon poetry, should also be taken into account. Altogether, it is impossible to attach quite as much weight to this test as Brandl does.

The autobiographical details which are put together from the epilogs in the Cynewulfian poems should also be taken with caution. The statement that "er (Cynewulf) war kein Gelehrter, doch ein kirchlich gebildeter Mann" is a little surprising (p. 1041). The recent investigations of Professor C. F. Brown (*Englische Studien*, xxxviii, pp. 196–233) show that far less information in regard to Cynewulf's life is afforded by the epilogs in the signed poems than has hitherto been supposed. "The explicit statement that he was an old man at the time he wrote *Elene*, . . . that his composition of poetry did not begin until after his conversion, . . . these two statements, together with his signature in the runes, constitute, I believe, the sum of the personal information imparted by Cynewulf to his readers in the epilogues of the four poems which he is known to have written" (p. 220). As to his learning, Professor Brown remarks, "He was no ordinary priest, but a man of uncommon erudition." Professor Brandl is, however, much more cautious than many scholars about this autobiographical material, rejecting the minstrel theory, and add-

ing, further on, "darf man Cynewulfs autobiographische Äusserungen als bare Münze nehmen," etc. A surprisingly small amount of space is allotted to the signed poems. Nothing appears to be said of the possibility of a connection between the *Andreas* and the *Fates of the Apostles*. Cf. Krapp's ed. of *Andreas*, pp. xxxvii ff. Perhaps the author feels that reference to dubious theories, even much-discussed ones, is better omitted. The section closes with an admirable summary of the changes in poetic ideals and technique observable through this period.

The discussion of prose in the time of Alfred and later consists largely of description and of re-statements of established facts. It may be noted, however, that Brandl disagrees with the theory that the prose portion of the *Paris Psalter* is the work of Alfred, siding with Bruce as against Wichtmann (p. 1070). He believes that Alfred relied more than usually in the translation of Bede upon the assistance of another, in this case a Mercian. Sedgfield's edition of the *Battle of Maldon*, Bos., 1904, might be added to the bibliography, p. 1097. In contrasting the *Rhyming Poem* with the *Höfuð-laun* of Egil Skallagrímsson, Brandl comes to the conclusion that it is more likely that the Iclander was imitating an Anglo-Saxon tradition than that he was introducing a foreign form himself (p. 1081). This may not command universal agreement. He places *Judith* in the tenth century, inclining to Foster's theory that it is a eulogy on Æthelflæd, the Lady of Mercia, a hypothesis which seems to be finding more favor, on the whole, than Professor Cook's, which assigns the piece to the ninth century.

The book as a whole is remarkably free from misprints. A few, which are not registered among the Druckversehen at the end, are noted below.^a Many such must in the nature of things occur in pages so full of minute detail as these.

^a P. 944, l. 29 read behielten das; p. 947, l. 34 read Wulfstan; p. 962, l. 16 read zunächst; p. 969 read F. B. Gummere; p. 977, heading, read Gemahls; p. 976 read der, l. 23; p. 969, l. 12 from bottom read F. Klæber; p. 980, l. 31 read Seaf.; p. 998, l. 17 from bottom, read Thrytho for Thryth(?); p. 1034, l. 13 read Christ I for Christ II; p. 1052, l. 31 read Ine. P. 957, last line, what is Archiv IC?

One lays the volume aside with the feeling that it is impossible to do it justice in a brief review, or to avoid creating a false impression in the reader's mind by the criticism of doubtful questions and the correction of inevitable errors. Hearty congratulations are certainly due to Professor Brandl on the admirable performance of a difficult task.

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MIDDLE ENGLISH POETRY.

The Seven Sages of Rome. Edited by Killis Campbell (Albion Series of Old English and Middle English Poetry). Boston: Ginn & Company, 1907. 8vo., pp. 217.

The Seven Sages marks the appearance of volume four of the Albion Series of Old English and Middle English poetry. In keeping with the aim of the Series, the present work is critically edited with introduction, explanatory notes, glossary, and index. The volume bears witness to a most painstaking scholarship in the vast amount of reading and comparing of authorities, texts, and manuscripts entailed in the editing of one of the most popular romances of the Middle Ages. And the results obtained have generally been presented in a form that is admirably usable. For bibliographical purposes, however, the index is incomplete, as it omits a number of references to authorities quoted in the book.

Some 114 pages of introduction, generously supplemented with foot-notes, attest the editor's familiarity with his subject, of which he has already given proofs in his dissertation, *A Study of the Romance of the Seven Sages with Special Reference to the Middle English Versions* (1898). The early history of the romance extends from its oriental genesis, believed to be Indian, of perhaps the fifth century B. C., through the Eastern group, which survives in eight versions,—one in Syriac, one in Greek, one in Hebrew, one in Old Spanish, one in Arabic, and three in Persian,—down to its transmission to Western Europe. The wide gap separating the Eastern and Western groups leads to the conclusion that this transmission was oral.